Dietary Approaches to Hyperkalemia

ASPC The American Society for Preventive Cardiology | HFA Heart Failure Association | European Society of Cardiology | ISN International Society of Nephrology | KDIGO Kidney Disease: Improving Global Outcomes | RPA Renal Physicians Association

What to Recommend to Patients:

A Balanced Diet is Important:

Balanced diet with fruits, vegetables, legumes, whole grains (base-producing, insulin-stimulating, high fiber content: ↓ K+ bioavailability)

Limit processed meat (acid-producing: ↑K+ bioavailability)

There are no "good" and "bad" foods. Encourage portion control, promote whole foods

Food Preparation Affects K+ content:

Foods w/ preservatives or additives, salt substitutes, and some supplements are high in K+[4]

Limit ultraprocessed foods – they often contain K+ additives

Double boiling (discard cooking water) decreases K+ content

Drying food concentrates K+

Other Considerations:

Control blood sugar and acidosis

Refer to dietitian for individualized nutrition care for patients with advanced CKD

Treat constipation to enhance gastrointestinal K+ excretion:

- ***High fibre diet***
- ***Balanced diet with physical activity***
- ***Adequate fluid intake***
- ***Use laxatives safe in CKD[5]***

Potassium Misconceptions:

Myth 1: Restricting dietary K+ is useful to prevent hyperkalemia

- *What we now know: Dietary K+ intake does not correlate well with serum K+[1] but serum K+ may be transiently elevated after high K+ meal*
- *Therefore, avoid extreme restriction of dietary K+*

Myth 2: Avoid fruits and vegetables – the main sources of dietary K+

- *What we now know: K+ is ubiquitous - meat, dairy, whole grains, legumes, and additives in processed foods are also significant sources[2]*
- *Despite K+ content, bioavailability varies depending on the food source*

Myth 3: Dietary potassium 'budget' should be spent on animal protein

- *What we now know: There is insufficient evidence to recommend a particular protein type[3]*
- *Follow nutritionally and culturally sound recommendations*

1. JREN 2020; 30(4): 276-285. 2. Kidney360 2020, 1 (1) 65-71. 3. AJKD Suppl 1: S1-S107. 4. JREN 2021; 31(2); 210-214.
5. http://www.bcrenal.ca/resource-gallery/Documents/Management%20of%20Constipation%20in%20Patients%20with%20Chronic%20Kidney%20Disease.pdf

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